

Bounce Coalition

Creating Trauma-Informed Communities in Rural Kentucky

By Beverly Winsch, PhD.

The Bounce Coalition launched in 2014 with a grant from the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky (FHK) for a program in Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) elementary schools.

At JCPS, Bounce interventions reduced out-of-school suspensions for students, improved staff perception of their skills for supporting youth experiencing trauma, improved student school climate survey results, increased parent engagement, and higher teacher retention.

Next, the FHK funded the Bounce Rural Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) project to demonstrate the application of trauma-informed training in a rural setting.

It was officially kicked off in the fall of 2018 and ended May 31, 2022.

The project had two main components:

(1) Provide training to the Russell County School District (RCSD) stakeholders (e.g., community, parents/guardians, district and school personnel) to increase the understanding of the potential impact of ACEs on physical and mental health, and to teach trauma-informed practices that would elevate student and staff resilience.

(2) Collaborate with the Lake Cumberland District Health Department (LCDHD) to train health educators to deliver Bounce 101 and Bounce 102 training modules to the 10 counties within their region.

The Bounce program at RCSD included professional development for teachers, staff and bus drivers, counselor and FRYSC consultations, peer support groups for

students, and education for parents, caregivers and the entire community. Bounce worked with the LCDHD to deploy “train-the-trainer” programs which promoted the growth of 10 resilient communities.

Some of the many achievements during this project include:

- Community screening of Jamie Redford’s film: Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope, followed by a panel discussion was attended by over 300 Russell County residents.

- LCDHD has 6 certified Bounce trainers.

- RCSD has 20 certified Bounce trainers.

- Foundational and advanced training to the 10-county region was delivered by Bounce & LCDHD in at least six sessions, the equivalent of 527 training hours.

- Staff from all schools received 3 hours of training in understanding and using strategies to build resilience in students. All bus drivers received similar training.

- Parent/grandparent training events on topics such as developmental assets and self-care.

- The climate survey showed gains in “Caring”, “Belonging”, and “Safety” for elementary students which resulted in an improvement on 71% of the survey items.

- Advanced training on topics such as de-escalation, self-care, effective problem-solving, and trauma-informed classroom management delivered to teachers at all levels (the equivalent of 1931 hours across all teachers).

- Teacher ratings of ability to provide student supports improved with each training.

- Final assessment showed that 97.1% of teachers reported “Adequate” or “Extensive” skills compared to 43.6% for the baseline assessment.

- On-site technical support to counselors and FRYSCs every month during the school year.

- Changes in safety drill procedures, and increased awareness of student concerns regarding relationships with each other.

- Trust in at least one adult continued to be a strength across all schools with gains at four of five schools.

- Suspension of elementary students decreased by 50%. School bus suspensions remained the same for elementary students but decreased for both middle and high school students.

- Reductions in suspensions related to

fighting decreased at all levels.

- Adoption of social-emotional learning curriculum at all levels.

- RCSD leadership responses showed sizeable gains on each dimension of the Organizational Readiness Assessment: Leadership (18%), Policy (49.1%), Finance (40.5%), Safety (27.5%) Continuous Improvement (62.5%), Student Supports (28%), and Staff Supports (46%).

- Trauma-informed plan required by the Safe Schools and Resiliency Act approved by the RCSD Board.

- The work of a Core Discipline Review Team led to changes in discipline policies regarding student referrals and suspensions.

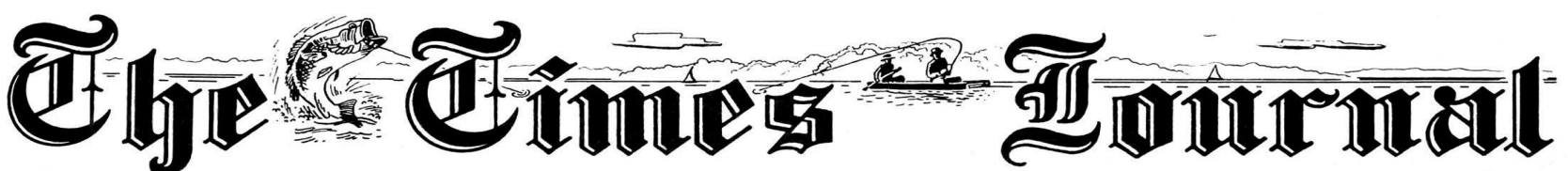
- These policies were adopted by the RCSD Board in June 2022.



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